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FOR NEA DAS PATTON AND NEA/ARP

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [YM](#)

SUBJECT: ROYG READY TO CANCEL THE FORUM FOR THE FUTURE

Classified By: Ambassador Stephen A. Seche for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

Summary

[¶1.](#) (C) Discouraged by a lack of enthusiasm from possible G8 co-hosts, and increasingly aware that the Badawi case will make the attendance of the Secretary of State unlikely, Foreign Minister AbuBakr al-Qirbi appears prepared to abort the Forum for the Future. On December 30, he asked the Ambassador to attend a January 2 meeting of the key players to finalize a plan that will allow the Forum to take place or, if necessary, announce its cancellation.

ROYG Ready to Pull the Plug

[¶2.](#) (C) In a December 30 meeting with the Ambassador, Foreign Minister al-Qirbi appeared to be resigned to the eventual cancellation of the Forum for the Future, saying its planning seems to have been "lost among the G8." He noted that he had spoken with the Japanese Ambassador, and Assistant Deputy Foreign Minister Khalid al-Akwa had spoken to the German Ambassador. He reported that the German Ambassador had expressed his government's view that, with the passing of the G8 presidency at years end, Germany no longer has a role to play in the Forum and has already spent all of its Forum funding. The Japanese Ambassador told the Foreign Minister that co-hosting a Forum in Yemen is a German responsibility.

[¶3.](#) (C) The Foreign Minister then proposed a meeting with the Ambassador and his German and Japanese counterparts on January 2 to formalize a joint position. "If the G8 feels we should forget about it, then we should forget about it," said al-Qirbi. He went on to propose that, following the meeting, an announcement should be made either by the Yemeni Government or as a joint ROYG-G8 statement. He made a point of noting that, if it were not a joint statement, the ROYG would feel compelled to include the "real" reasons the Forum was cancelled. The Ambassador plans to meet with his German and Japanese counterparts on December 31 to prepare for the January 2 meeting.

[¶4.](#) (C) Al-Qirbi then reminded the Ambassador of an outstanding bill owed to the Hotel Movenpick for 258 thousand USD, and the USG agreement to pay 100 thousand USD of this bill and solicit donations from other G8 countries to pay the rest. The Ambassador noted that he had raised the issue during recent meetings in Washington, and would request an update on the status of the payment.

Comment

[¶5.](#) (C) Al-Qirbi appears to have resigned himself to the fact

that the absence of a resolution to the Badawi situation precludes Secretary of State attendance at the Forum. Given that reality, and the continued resistance from putative G8 co-hosts, the ROYG seems to have decided its time to fish or cut bait: reach agreement on a way forward or cancel, making clear who it believes is responsible.

SECHE